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The Spirit of Democracy

—BY—
MERAB EBERLE.



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Franklin, Ohio

THE SPIRIT OF DEMOCRACY

An Allegorical Pageant

By MERAB EBERLE

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FRANKLIN, OHIO - DENVER, COLO.

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The Spirit of Democracy.

CHARACTERS.

Autocracy—Old, stern-faced man clothed in kingly robes, crown on head, sceptre in hand.

Spirit of Democracy—Clinging garments of white and silver, unbound hair held back from face by a silver circlet. Should have beauty of form and face.

America—Dressed as are the current representations of Columbia, white flowing garments and draped flag; wears liberty cap made of field of American flag.

England—Woman dressed in white flowing garments, decorated with many small Great Britian flags. Carries a sword.

France—Small, vivacious, draperies of white, belted in at waist line; a loose chiffon-like cape thrown back from snoulders; wears liberty cap of scarlet and carries the banner of France.

Russia—Large, brawny man dressed in Russian peasant costume and bearing spiked club.

Italy—Dapper man in Italian dress. Carries flag of Italy in left hand that the right may be free to unsheathe the dagger which he wears at the belt.

Belgium } May be impersonated by children. Gar-
Servia } ments should be tattered. The national
Poland } emblem may distinguish each of
them, or they could carry banners bearing their re-
spective names.

Prophet—In hermit's garb.

Messengers—Wear military costumes, preferably German in style.

Pages—Court costume.

TMP 96-007257

Aerial Voice,—This character not visible. Should be possessed of clear, sweet voice.

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STAGE DIRECTIONS.

The stage setting need not be elaborate. In the rear center Autocracy's throne is placed. Have this rest on a dais, the steps to the throne being richly carpeted. Pages sit on either side of throne.

The success of the pageant depends upon the dignity with which it is carried out. Court manners should be used by the messengers who bring tidings to Autocracy.

Music can be used effectively, especially the national airs of the different nations played by orchestra, or if the latter is not procurable, by piano.

The pageant may be given either in or out of doors. If at night, tableau lights will lend much to the scene.

PROLOGUE BY PROPHET.

At last the hour looms near when Justice fair
And her twin sister Right shall come to every hearth.
At last the time has come when old Autocracy,
The hoary headed monarch of all days that were,
Shall leave his world-old throne and sweet Democracy

Will reign in utter charity o'er every
Man within the thick-sown centers of the earth.
Hark! a sound. It boomed upon my ear
With a dull rumble! The Crown Prince Ferdinand
Of all the Austrias is dead in Servian lands.

(Pause)

Little the peaceful nations know and little dream
That from this death shall grow a conflict such
As the old earth with all its store of terrors
Never has seen before. But peace at length
Will come and with that peace, Democracy.

(*Curtain Rises.*)

(*Autocracy discovered seated on his throne.*)

Autocracy:

Ah, would they dare to thwart me and my will
These little people in this little land!

My armies with their strength and power must I
Now hurl against them. Sword shall they feel
And drop before the cannon's heated breath
Owning me lord, naming me all victorious.

(Enter First Messenger.)

First Mess:

Most loving lord, most kingly of all masters,
Something I must relate you.

Autocracy:

Quickly speak.

First Mess:

The Russias are aflame and sweep upon
Your Teutons from the East and pour on Austrian soil,
Seeking to quell the conquering Hapsberg's might
And snatch away his prize, the Servian lands.

Autocracy:

Now will I play my Kaiser 'gainst my Czar;
For Russia frets within, and in her lands
Many have ceased to praise my austere majesty.

(Enter Second Messenger)

Second Mess:

And France in anger dire has taken up
The sword, that Serbs might still untrammelled be.

Autocracy:

And so my armies shall beat down upon her;
Take her fair fields of grain, her mines filled up
With mineral wealth; shall leap to fair Paris
And make that far-famed city yield to my rule.

(Enter Third Messenger.)

Third Mess:

Serbia, Belgium, Poland are fast upon their way
To ask your pity. They are just beyond
The great and all-forbidding portals now.

(Serbia, Poland and Belgium enter, they fling themselves prostrate before the throne. Blue tableau lights.)

Serbia. (On knees with hands outstretched beseechingly towards Autocracy.)

Oh king, oh gracious lord, I only ask
To rule myself. The Austrian yoke is heavy.

Belgium:

Thy armies crush out my life! Vast hordes of terror!
In mercy and in kindness drive them
I pray you back. But no! your eye as cruel
And merciless as were a god of wrath (*Here she starts up assuming a defiant air.*)
Smite me they may, but never smite me dead.

Poland:

Weary, oh weary of this unending strife
Autocracy I beg again of thee
For life. My people die, they starve in fields
A month ago hung heavy with their grain.
Now pillage stalks unchecked across my lands
With evil famine laughing in her train.

Autocracy:

Begone the whole of you. I have no while
To listen to the rabble's cry. To him
Who brings me gifts of might do I bend down
My ear. To him stretch out the favoring sceptre.
Begone you whimpering, frettish crew.

(Exeunt Belgium, Poland and Serbia swiftly. Enter France.)

France:

Hold!

I too have listened, I have also heard.
And in the name of her who gave me birth
Into another life of passing richness
And such great beauty as is yet undreamed
By them who know the rule of kings, I'll bring
That hoary head of yours swift to its lasting grave.

(Exit.)

Autocracy:

A bold damsel and I rather like her face
Soon will she be within my power, her lands
Again be mine.

(Triumphant music heard, colored lights flood the scene. Spirit of Democracy enters.)

Autocracy: (Suddenly becoming aware of her presence cries out:)

And who is that, the tall one with a face of light?

Spirit of Democracy:

It is Democracy! Well may you tremble on your throne

And well may the sceptre quiver in your hand,
My armies swift beat back the avalanches
Of the vast foe, your myrmidons.

Autocracy (Excitedly and querulously as befits an old man.)

Drive back my minions never. Why I wield
In my behalf all cruelties man can dream of.

Democracy:

Or devils forge within the furnaces of hell.

(Looking off stage and calling)

England I've need of thee and Italy
Come swiftly here.

(England and Italy enter.)

Together:

Why did you call us here? In rose gardens
We were wandering 'long smoothly flowing streams
And peaceful seas.

Democracy:

To throw Autocracy form off his ill-gained throne.

England:

Methinks the fellow has a kingly face.

Democracy:

But swift upon his mandates follows ill.
Evil crowns all his deeds with bitter strife.

England:

And should there be no more the rule of kings
Where would their wondrous glory pass and all
Their splendid pageantry of pomp and power,

Bright jeweled courts and flashing diadems
And ladies radiant in haughty loveliness?

Italy:

Oh, we have dreamed of those sweet halycon days
When all the jeweled splendor reigns
And all the soft airs of Arabic tales
Would meet to make our nature such a king
That all the world would pause to give him praise.

Democracy:

In the new burst of glory and of light,
In which freedom's ne'er setting sun shall flood the
earth,
Will such a time of perfect beauty come?
So fair the earth will wax beneath the warmth
Of its pervading and exultant rays
That every man shall feel himself a king.
And such a wealth of happiness shall find
Its way to our old earth as never came
To those who were the slaves of emperor
And toiled that he might sit in splendor rare
Through all the length of his most royal days.

Italy and England:

We love the pomp of kings and not their power.

Democracy:

You bow before a shadow king. You have
No ruler, and your law is all the people's voice.

England (flourishing sword.)

I'll go to France to fight for people's rule.

Italy (Drawing dagger.)

I'll storm the Alps to fight for people's rights.

(Exeunt)

Aerial Voice:

Russia has thrown the Romanoff, the proud
And haughty Romanoff down from his kingly throne.

*Autocracy: (Shrinking back with hands pressed
over ears.)*

The spirits of the air are speaking. Bid them cease.

(Enter Russia, staggering as from a long sleep.)

Russia:

I know not where to go. Lead me, for I
Am almost blind. The world totters and the earth
Touches the wrathful sky. They close upon me.

Democracy:

If he had ought to aid him in direction
Of this, his new found state, well would it be
With me, and well with all the world.

(Red lights flare. Orchestra plays Star Spangled Banner. America enters.)

America:

Little I dreamed that when that bomb first burst
In Servian lands that thou wert calling me,
Spirit that bred me first, gave me my strength
And pride, else were I earlier here to aid.

(Sees Russia and advances toward him.)

Poor Russia, blinded by a too long sleep
Come take thy sister's arm. Yea, I will lead
Thee up and on. Let my cool hands but press
Against thy aching eyes.

Russia: (In elation)

I see! I see!

(All enter with exception of messengers.)

France:

America has come and Russia wakes.

Italy:

'Tis won, 'tis won. The victory's ours at last.

France:

See old Autocracy, mark how he shrinks
And pales, grow numb and falls from off his throne.
Out with him, drag the rascal forth.

(Autocracy fits his action to the words: Following last line several rush forth at France's bidding.)

England:

Be gentle
His was a certain pride and dignity.
And much of history's spoken in his praise.

America:

But he is dead and with him much of wrong.

(Autocracy is dragged out.)

So pass the worthless beauty of the olden days
And court and king and velvet tapestry
Magnificence of throne, sceptre and glittering crown.

Russia, (turning toward Spirit of Democracy)

Hail Spirit of Freedom, round whose head
Shall shine exultant all the stars of night,
And all the suns and moons of countless worlds.
To thee the hoary mountains will give homage
And the innumerable waves of the unending seas.
Rise thou in unutterable glory and let
The peoples of all nations name thee queen.

*(During the exhortation the Spirit of Democracy
mounts to the top step of the throne.)*

America:

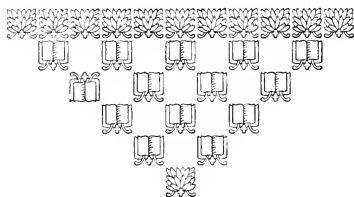
So let us crown her with a diadem
That flashes from our nations' happy hearts.
So let us pledge to her our fealty
And bear her banner and her glorious reign
To the dim forests where savages now lurk,
And near the icy poles where yellow men
Stalk the white bear and spear the soft eyed seal.
Small was I once, a tiny, starvling child
Who strangled 'neath the hands of foreign kings.
Democracy then found me. Caught me up.
Gave me the gifts of light and precious life;
Gave me of freedom and I waxed so great
That now my coffers hold a countless wealth,
My fields lie golden with a weight of grain
And all my orchards hang heavy with fruit.
Yea, would I fight for her, though all my men
Laid dead in stenchful trenches thickly strewn.
Yea, would I fight if all my wealth had fled

Through roar of musketry and cannon's crash.
Onward I'll go forever in her name!

All (crying exultantly)

Hail to our long sought and most gracious queen.

*(Democracy stretches out her hands in benediction.
The nations kneel in suppliance. The music is very
soft and sweet. Colored lights play over the scene and
the curtain falls.)*



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